

Economics Model

There are 4 stages to model the economic development of a civilization (it can be applied to an individual as well, or to a group between an individual and an entire civilization, but typically we discuss civilizations).

Stage 1: Circle of Survival - people must spend most of their time finding food and water (and shelter), and therefore have no time to do other things. Examples include early hunter-gatherers, and the tribes of Papua New Guinea.

Transition to stage 2 occurs when people are efficient enough at obtaining food that they no longer must spend all their time on that task, and develop a food surplus. Generally this happens with animal and plant domestication - the rise of agriculture and animal husbandry.

Stage 2: Circle of Leisure - not as fun as it might sound - it's just that people have time to start to specialize (not everyone spends their time getting food).

Transition to stage 3 occurs when the civilization becomes significantly specialized. Generally this leads to social classes - division based on job and/or wealth.

Stage 3: Circle of Stratification - so named for the social strata (classes). Society is well developed and often strong.

Transition to stage 4 occurs when all the GREATS are in full effect and the civilization is thriving.

Stage 4: Circle of Advancement - see the transition description.

So that's the model. Often we use a graphic organizer of concentric ovals (or circles) to describe the model, with 1 in the center and 4 on the outside.

Significantly, it is possible to fall back to an earlier stage. Natural disasters, political incompetence, wars, acts of god, etc. can lead to a fall.